

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 CU-05 OMB-01 FRB-03 CIEP-03 AID-20 IO-14

EB-11 NIC-01 USPS-02 OC-06 CCO-00 DRC-01 (ISO) W

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P R 071210Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1442

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

S E C R E T TRIPOLI 0869

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR LY EG

SUBJECT: SADAT-QADHAFI DISPUTE

REF: CAIRO 5896

1. SADAT'S TOUGH OPEN LETTER TO QADHAFI AND RCC, WITH ITS
THREAT THAT QADHAFI'S POLICY OF SUBVERSION WILL HAVE GRAVE
CONSEQUENCES, FACES QADHAFI AND RCC WITH WHAT MUST BE A
HARD CHOICE. QADHAFI KNOWS SADAT COULD, BY WITHDRAWING
KEY CATEGORIES OF SOME 150,000 EGYPTIANS HERE, DISLOCATE
FRAGILE LIBYAN INSTITUTIONS. WITHDRAWAL OF EGYPTIAN

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TEACHES, FOR EXAMPLE, WOULD PARALYZE EXPANDING LIBYAN

EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM, AND SAME IS TRUE IN OTHER AREAS. THERE ARE STILL MANY EGYPTIAN ADVISORS ASSIGNED TO LIBYAN MILITARY. THEIR WITHDRAWAL WOULD BE ANOTHER BLOW. MANY EGYPTIAN TEACHERS ARE NOW ON VACATION IN EGYPT, AND THEY COULD BE DENIED PERMISSION TO RETURN. SIMPLE PRUDENCE WOULD SEEM TO REQUIRE THAT QADHAFI STOP HIS PLOTTING AND TONE DOWN HIS EXTERNAL RADIO BROADCASTS, ESPECIALLY AS EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS STILL IN LIBYA ARE IN A POSITION TO MONITOR LIBYAN SUBVERSION.

2. QADHAFI, HOWEVER, HAS NEVER LISTENED TO ARGUMENTS OF PRUDENCE AND CAUTION WHERE HIS PRINCIPLES ARE CONCERNED, AND WE WOULD NOT EXPECT HIM TO BEGIN NOW. HE EVIDENTLY BELIEVES SADAT IS TRAITOR TO ARAB NATION, AND THAT HIS REMOVAL FROM POWER IS A CONDITION FOR ARAB UNITY. IN THIS CONTEXT, HIS ACTIONS ARE FOOLHARDY, BUT LOGICAL, AND TO US EGYPTIAN ARGUMENTS THAT QADHAFI IS INSANE ARE MORE POLITICALLY MOTIVATED THAN THEY ARE BASED ON MEDICAL GROUNDS.

3. IF QADHAFI DOES NOT BACK OFF FOR AWHILE, TWO COUNTRIES MAY BE HEADING FOR CONFRONTATION OF SOME KIND INVOLVING EGYPTIANS HERE. WE UNDERSTAND FROM RELIABLE SOURCES THAT POSTAL AUTHORITIES IN EGYPT HAVE FOR SOME DAYS BEEN REFUSING TO ACCEPT PACKAGES, LETTERS, AND TELEGRAMS SENT FROM LIBYA, ON PRETEXT THEY ARE UNDELIVERABLE OR THAT LINES ARE DOWN. SENDERS ARE ALMOST ALL EGYPTIANS THEMSELVES. THIS, TOGETHER WITH GOE DECISION (CAIRO 5824) TO PREVENT EGYPTIANS FROM TRAVELLING TO LIBYA EXCEPT FOR THOSE WITH CONTRACTS TO WORK HERE, AND GOE DECISION TO STOP EGYPTIAN SHIPS FROM CALLING AT LIBYAN PORTS, SUGGESTS POLICY OF SYSTEMATICALLY RESTRICTING EGYPTIAN CONTRACTS WITH LIBYA. WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN CAIRO'S ASSESSMENT OF WHAT NEXT STEP MIGHT BE.

4. WHATEVER HAPPENS, WE BELIEVE OUR INTERESTS ARE BEST SERVED BY AVOIDING ANY APPEARANCE OF TAKING SIDES IN THIS DISPUTE. WHILE OUR SYMPATHIES ARE OBVIOUSLY WITH SADAT, WHO HAS BEEN SORELY PROVOKED BY QADHAFI, WE SHOULD DO NOTHING THAT COULD GIVE RISE TO CHARGES OF
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INTERVENTION IN WHAT IS TYPICALLY ARAB AFFAIR.
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